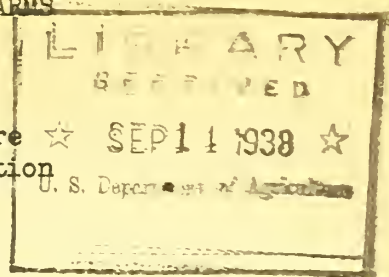


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Johannesburg Farms
FACTS ABOUT JOHANNESBURG FARMS

Department of Agriculture ☆
Farm Security Administration



OFFICIAL NAME: Johannesburg Farms

LOCATION: An infiltration project, individual homestead units are scattered over a large area in several counties. The project headquarters are at Grayling, Michigan, 28 miles south of Gaylord and about 44 miles from Johannesburg.

HISTORY OF PROJECT: Initiated by the Resettlement Administration, February 10, 1935, the project was transferred to the Michigan State Corporation, June 11, 1936.

PURPOSE OF PROJECT: To provide productive farms for low-income farm families whose land has been purchased for the purposes of land conservation. Families will grow clover, potatoes, oats, barley, corn, wheat and alfalfa. Cows and chickens are being raised.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: Johannesburg Farms total 2,000 acres of productive land and provide 18 family units. The project involves the purchase of one or more farms in each of six counties, namely, Bay, Gladwin, Ogemaw, Wexford, Otsego and Cheboygan. Of these six counties, all but four of the farms purchased are concentrated in two adjoining counties, Otsego and Cheboygan.

HOUSE DESCRIPTION: In practically all instances the farms which were purchased had adequate buildings. Other than repair work there was no construction except on three units in Cheboygan County. The units constructed in Cheboygan County were small, conservative houses and barns designed to adequately accommodate as cheaply as possible the average family and agricultural needs of that territory.

HOMESTEADERS: The 18 families occupying the units are all white and with two exceptions, American born; one man was born in Finland and one in Canada. The majority of the 16 remaining families are natives of Michigan and over half of the male and female heads of families were born in Northern Michigan.

 Ages of the heads of families vary from 34 to 55. Women of the families are slightly younger, varying from 28 to 55. The education level varies from a low of 4th grade to a high of 10th grade.

HOMESTEADERS:
(Continued)

Eight of the men were full time farmers and had never pursued any other occupation; eight were farmers at the time that they moved to the new farms, but had had industrial experience and were mechanics; two were lumbermen with farming as a side issue but with the lumber industry on the decline, they devoted themselves exclusively to farming.

Two units are occupied by single men; three by couples with no children at home; and the remaining 13 by families varying from two children to nine.

Fourteen of the 18 families either were receiving relief at the time of selection or had received assistance during the past three years. Twelve families were from the Au Sable Purchase Area; four were clients of the RR Division and were recommended by the County Supervisors; and two were selected from the general application list after the LU families had been given the opportunity to select a farm.

